

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 05407 020859Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 /077 W

-----047002 040650Z /10

R 020630Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7488

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABD 5407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, CH, XD

SUBJECT: CHINESE VICE PREMIER'S VISIT ANNOUNCED

REF: PEKING 1641 (NOTAL)

1. PRESS REPORTS THIS MORNING THAT CHINESE VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO WILL VISIT PAKISTAN IN MID-JUNE (REFTEL). IMMEDIATE OCCASION FOR VISIT IS FORMAL OPENING OF KARAKORAM HIGHWAY, BUILT BY CHIESE AND SCHEDULED FOR INAUGURATION, WE UNDERSTAND, ON 20 JUNE. (WALI OF SWAT TOLD US ON 31 MAY THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DRIVE THE ROAD, REMARKING ON ITS BEAUTIFUL VISTAS AND NOTING THAT, ALTHOUGH SOME ROUGH SPOTS REMAIN, IT IS NEARLY DONE).

2. POLCOUNS WAS TOLD BY CHINESE COUNTERPART ON 1 JUNE OF INTENDED QUOTE HIGH-LEVEL UNQUOTE CHINESE
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VISIT IN CONNECTION WITH HIGHWAY OPENING DURING A CONVERSATION WHIHC HAD ALSO TOUCHED ON PAKISTAN'S SEARCH FOR REASSURANCE VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS FOLLOWING AFGHAN COUP OF A MONTH AGO. CONTEXT STRONGLY SUGGESTED CHINESE SEE KENG PIAO VISIT AS OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SOME POLITICAL SHORING WHILE ALSO CASHING IN ON A GOOD PRESS RELATING TO CHINESE ASSISTANCE.

3. CHINESE POLCOUNS DISCLAIMED KNOWLEDGE, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS OF OTHER DIPLOMATS, WHETHER ROAD COMPLETION WILL MEAN OPENING OF HUNZA TO FOREIGN VISITORS, INDICATING WITH A SMILE THAT HE--LIKE ANYONE ELSE--HAS APPLIED TO MFA FOR PERMISSION.

4. COMMENT: KENG PIAO WILL BE THE FIRST TOP LEVEL CHINESE LEADER TO VISIT PAKISTAN SINCE VICE PREMIER LI HSIENG-NIEN DI SO IN 1975; HIS WILL ALSO BE THE FIRST VISIT BY A TOP RANKING FOREIGN VISITOR SINCE THE KABUL COUP UNSETTLED THE REGIONAL BALANCE IN SOUTH ASIA. HUMMEL

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